

JEWELRY FINDING AND METHOD OF USING SAME WITH
ORNAMENT HAVING INTEGRATED CLIP AND GRIPPING MECHANISM

RELATED APPLICATION

Reference is made to our co-pending non-provisional application. See No 09-602-097, filed June 22, 2000. This application being a continuation in part of said application.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally to the field of jewelry, and more particularly to an improved jewelry finding and ornament with integrated clip and gripping mechanism for use with pierced earlobes of a wearer.

Jewelry findings suitable for pierced ears are known in the art, and normally include a shaft having a piece of jewelry in the form of an ornament permanently affixed to one end of the shaft. The shaft penetrates the opening in the earlobe, and normally is secured by an expandable gripping member to maintain the earring in position. The inner end of the shaft is sometimes concealed from view by the hair of the wearer. However, when the hair is worn or styled in a manner which exposes the ears, the inner end of the shaft and the expandable gripping mechanism are unattractively exposed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

In the drawing, to which reference will be made in the specification, similar reference characters have been employed to designate corresponding parts throughout the several views.

Figure 1 is a schematic side elevational view of a jewelry finding embodying the invention.

Figure 2 is a similar schematic side elevational view of a jewelry finding embodying a variation of the invention showing a smoothed curved enlargement located at each free end.

Figure 3 is a schematic side elevational view of a jewelry finding embodying a variation of the invention showing a smoothed curved enlargement located at each free end without a medial enlargement.

Figure 4 is a similar schematic side elevational view thereof showing the engagement of a free end with a first ornament.

Figure 5 is a similar schematic side elevational view thereof showing the engagement of a free end with a first ornament embodying a variation of the invention showing a smoothed curved enlargement located at each free end.

Figure 6 is a similar schematic side elevational view showing the engagement of the embodiment with a pierced earlobe of a wearer and a second engaged ornament.

Figure 7 is a similar schematic side elevational view showing the engagement of the embodiment with a pierced earlobe of a wearer and a second engaged ornament embodying a variation

of the invention showing a smoothed curved enlargement located at each free end.

Figures 8A, 8B and 8C are schematic perspective views of three variants of medially positioned enlargements comprising parts of the embodiment.

Figure 9 is a schematic view in elevation of an ornament with integrated clip and gripping mechanism forming part of the embodiment.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly stated, the invention contemplates the provision of an improved jewelry wire finding adapted to penetrate a pierced ear of a wearer having first and second free ends, each adapted to selectively engage ornaments in detachable condition, whereby the unattractive appearance of the exposed inner end of the finding may be as attractive as the outer end and whereby the wearer is able to construct an earring of the wearer's own design by combining multiple ornaments of the wearer's choice on the finding. The ornaments may be identical or dissimilar. The ornaments can be worn on the inner and outer end of the finding and can be reversed at the discretion of the wearer. An enlargement is added to a medial portion of the shaft to limit the degree of movement of the ornaments, the enlargement being adapted to engage a surface of the earlobe.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DISCLOSED EMBODIMENT

In accordance with a first embodiment of the invention, the device, generally indicated by reference character 10, comprises broadly, an elongated shaft 11 (Figure 8A) having first and second ornaments 12 and 13 selectively engaged thereon (Figure 6).

The shaft 11 is between approximately one-half to three quarters inch long, and is usually made from semi-rigid wire used in the art. It is bounded by a first end 20 and a second end 21. Positioned between first and second elongate portions 22 and 23 is an enlargement 24 which is of sufficient size to normally prevent passage through a pierced earlobe of the wearer. The purpose of the enlargement is to position the shaft relative to the earlobe, so that there is sufficient length of shaft on either side of the earlobe to assure that ornaments are securely affixed and to prevent disconnection of the adjacent ornament due to lack of manual access.

Referring to Figures 2 and 3, a pair of small elongated enlargements are provided on the ends of the shaft which will pass a normally sized opening in an earlobe, and serve to enhance the gripping function of a gripping means on an ornament as will more fully be described hereinafter.

Referring to Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7, each of the ornaments 12 and 13 may be of any desired configuration, including a decorative outer surface 30 and an inner surface 31 mounting a clip 32. Normally, a short internal bore 34 is

provided to enable the clip 32 to have sufficient purchase on the shaft after installation.

Since the shaft 11 is not permanently secured to either ornament 12 or 13, any desired combination of design and number of ornaments may be used. As illustrated in Figures 4 and 5, normally one or more ornament will be engaged on one end of the shaft prior to inserting the opposite free end of the shaft through the lobe of the wearer, following which the subsequent ornaments are installed. The enlargement 24 allows a secure way to hold the shaft while installing an ornament onto the first free end of the shaft as well as while removing the ornament from the shaft. The enlargement 24 can abut either surface of the earlobe providing sufficient length of shaft to prevent the adjacent ornament on the first free end of the shaft from being pushed too far on the shaft thereby providing the ornament on the second free end with enough room to be securely fastened to the shaft. The earring is removed by merely reversing the above-described operations.

Turning now to a second embodiment of the invention, as illustrated in Figure 8B, this embodiment differs from the embodiment in Figure 8A by substituting a loop 40 for the disc 24 of the first embodiment. The disc 24 may be conveniently soldered or otherwise affixed to the elongated shaft. The loop 40 may be made by twisting a desired medial portion of the shaft producing two free ends.

Turning to a third variation of the embodiment, as illustrated in Figure 8C, this embodiment differs from the principal embodiment in that disc 40 is replaced by an enlargement consisting of a gripping mechanism which is encased in non-expandable material 45. This gripping mechanism provides for the movement of the enlargement along the shaft in such a manner as to allow for different lengths to be achieved on either side of the enlargement to accommodate various sizes of ornaments while maintaining a snug fit to the earlobe of the wearer. In relationship to Figure 2, the embodiment may be constructed to include a smooth, curved enlargement at each free end small enough to pass through the earring hole of a earlobe of the wearer and large enough to prevent the gripping mechanism encased in the non-expandable material from passing through thus preventing the enlargement from being fully disengaged from the shaft.

In the fourth variant illustrated in Figure 9, there is an ornament consisting of a decorative piece of jewelry 42 with a synthetic resin-like grip or other gripping mechanism 43 integrated into the body of the ornament 42. The free end of the shaft projects into a clip 44, resulting in the embodiment being positioned adjacent to the earlobe or the enlargement.

It may thus be seen that we have invented highly useful improvements in the jewelry finding art by means of which we have provided the basic component of an earring system comprised of three basic separable parts, the first of which is an elongated wire shaft with an enlargement having first and second free ends, and the second and third parts of which are first and second ornaments selectively engage able with a free end by means of an integral clip. This makes possible an attractive appearance at the inner surface of the earlobe of a wearer, where the hair of the wearer is worn in a manner to expose the earlobe. It also makes possible for the wearer to create a variety of different designs of earrings using different ornaments, and makes it easy to for the wearer to reverse said ornaments to be worn on inner or outer surfaces of the earlobes of the wearer thereby creating a reversible post-type earring for pierced ears. The ornamental elements may be of identical or dissimilar configuration, depending upon the taste of the wearer, and the device may be placed in installed condition as well as removed in an easy manner. Means is provided in the form of an enlargement to allow a secure way to hold the shaft while installing an ornament onto the first free end of the shaft as well as while removing the ornament from the shaft. The enlargement provides sufficient length of shaft to prevent the adjacent ornament on the first free end of the shaft from being pushed too far on the shaft thereby providing the ornament on the

second free end with enough room to be securely fastened to the shaft.

We wish it to be understood that we do not consider the invention to be limited to the precise details of the structure shown and set forth in the specification, for obvious modifications will occur to those skilled in the art to which the invention pertains.

We claim: